

## Is There Lead in DuPont Water?

Recently there has been quite a bit of attention paid to lead in drinking water supplies. This weekend, news reports indicated that up to 2,000 homes in Tacoma may be at risk for elevated levels of lead. The cause in Tacoma is most likely due to lead in the connection between the water main and a customer's home line. These connections, called gooseneck connections due to their appearance, were likely installed in the early 1900s. We do not have the same concern as older cities, though, and there is no lead in the DuPont water system.

In 1986, through an amendment of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the US Congress instituted a lead ban on public water systems. Since then, the City has shuttered and segregated two wells in Historic Village and more importantly, rebuilt and replaced all lead or lead-containing components in the City water system. The City's present water system was built and put into service from 1990 – 2007, which postdated the lead ban, and is lead-free. Our water from the aquifer does not contain lead. As with any water system it can still get in the drinking water of older homes through the pipes in the house. All of Northwest Landing was built with lead-free plumbing parts. Homes in Historic Village and El Rancho Madrona may or may not have plumbing with lead connections, solder, etc. since they are older (the City has no way to know if your older home has lead components or not).

In conjunction with required testing, we take samples from residences on a random basis. The last test was in 2013 and included 34 homes in both Historic Village and El Rancho Madrona. The highest level we detected was .002 parts per million with the action level defined by the EPA as .015 parts per million. We are due to take samples again this summer. If you'd like to test your water, check out the links below. Prices vary widely depending on how many contaminants you want to test for, but it should be in the \$20-\$100 range for lead.

All contaminants get concentrated into higher levels the longer water sits in a pipe without moving, but lead especially collects after the water sits for six hours or so (overnight is a good example). That is why running the cold water for about two minutes before using the first draw in the morning or when the water hasn't moved for over six hours is a good way to get the best quality water.

Here are some basic steps to take with drinking water. *Always* use cold water for cooking and drinking, never hot water. Hot water can cause higher concentrations of most contaminants and can even bring with it metals from the hot water heater. Studies have shown that running the water out of the tap until it runs cold will flush out the lead and other contaminants that are introduced through home plumbing. To be the safest, though, remember to run the cold water for about two minutes before using it after it's been sitting. Taking a shower, running the washer or dishwasher will do that without wasting water. If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works Director, Gus Lim at 253-912-5380.

Some links about lead and drinking water:

**Annual Water Report:** <http://www.dupontwa.gov/index.aspx?NID=247>

**EPA Link:** <https://www.epa.gov/your-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water#reducehome> On this website towards the bottom, you can read about and link to the Copper and Lead Rule which is what Flint, MI is running afoul of since they did not control the corrosivity of the water in their system among other serious problems. Our Water Report is the Consumer Confidence Report required by federal law that you'll see in this section.

**WA Department of Health:**

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater/Contaminants/Lead>

**WA State list of accredited labs for in-home testing:**

<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/laboratorysearch/SearchWA.aspx>

Instructions

1. Use a nearby city in the search box as DuPont does not have a certified water lab in its borders.
2. Check the small box marked "Show only Labs that accept General Public and Commercial samples"
3. Look for labs that test for metals under "Category"
4. Click on the link for the lab name and at the top left of the resulting page, a number and name for the lab will be displayed